

Moniz-Carroll, Rhonda

From: Regina Milano <Regina.Milano@whschools.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 31, 2015 1:30 PM
To: JudTestimony
Subject: Testimony for 2 bills: SUPPORT HB 6187 (court advocate for animals) and SUPPORT SB 1128 (AAC accelerated rehab in cases of animal abuse)

April 1, 2015

Re:

SUPPORT of HB 6187, AN ACT CONCERNING COURT PROCEEDINGS AND THE PROTECTION OF ANIMALS

and

SUPPORT of SB 1128, AN ACT CONCERNING THE USE OF ACCELERATED REHABILITATION IN THE CASE OF ANIMAL ABUSE

Dear Co-Chair Coleman, Co-Chair Tong, and Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee,

The nature of these crimes to which these Bills pertain are no less heinous than were they committed against humans and we are far too late in accepting that fact. Those who commit crimes against animals often do so because the animals cannot defend themselves. The fact that they cannot vote should not prevent them from having a voice, because although they do not communicate in the same way we do, they do absolutely, as studies prove, communicate their ability to feel emotions, act on intelligence and demonstrate appropriate reactions to environmental stimuli, including violence. For these reasons, they must have legal representation when crimes are committed against them. The animals are terrorized, neglected and denied the basic necessities of life, which includes compassion. It constitutes domestic violence and in cases such as the one in which Alex Wullaert tortured and hung Pitbull Desmond, Animals are frequently abused as part of the domestic abuse cycle to further psychologically injure the human domestic partner. People who abuse animals are a danger to the greater public and must be held accountable through intense and long term psychological treatment. But like child molesters, who often claim that the urge may not diminish post treatment, those who commit these crimes against animals must never be permitted to be guardians (living beings ought not to be "owned"), of animals again.

A 2013 research report by the Office of Legislative Research ([2013-R-0148](#)) describes procedural outcome of animal cruelty offenses from 2002 through 2012 (n = 3,699). Table 1 shows that 51% of offenses were nolle (this means that the prosecutor decided not to prosecute), 33% were dismissed, 0.2 % resulted in findings of not guilty, and only 16% resulted in guilty findings. These data constitute condoning of animal cruelty 84% of animal cruelty cases and this is simply unacceptable. We need much stricter laws in defense of non-human animals. And while the moral issue of stopping animal cruelty should enough of a reason to advance these bills, doing so will also have the added benefit of reducing harm caused to humans.

Please accept this testimony in SUPPORT of HB 6187, which would establish a process for appointing an advocate for an animal that is the subject of a criminal court proceeding, and in SUPPORT of SB 1128, which would prevent persons charged with committing animal abuse from using accelerated rehabilitation.

HB 6187 will help to facilitate animal cruelty prosecutions by ensuring appropriate representation for the victims.

SB 1128 will help to ensure that violence toward animals is taken seriously and promotes appropriately severe penalties as well as a record of these crimes in cases where people are responsible for causing animals to suffer.

Sincerely,

Dr. Regina N. Milano
22 Forest Hills Road
West Haven, CT 06516

"The thinking [person] must oppose all cruel customs no matter how deeply rooted in tradition and surrounded by a halo. When we have a choice, we must avoid bringing torment and injury into the life of another..." Albert Schweitzer

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